



# **Foster Care and Adoption**

## **Kentucky Cabinet for Families and Children**

### **Department for Community Based Services**

## **Foster Care and Adoption Programs**

When children have been abused or neglected and must be separated from their parents or other relatives, they are most often placed in the temporary and safe care of approved foster parents. Foster parents have been trained to help children through frightening and traumatic events in their lives.

While children are in temporary foster care, the main goal of the Cabinet for Families and Children (CFC) is, as quickly as possible, to find permanent homes where the children can be safe, secure, and healthy in mind, body, and spirit. In some cases, that might be back with their birth parents after the parents have received counseling and other services. In other cases, however, the courts may terminate the birth parents' rights and free children for adoption.

Adoption is the legal process of making a family of parents and children not born to them. In many cases, foster parents choose to become the permanent and legal adoptive parents of children who have been in their foster care. A temporary situation (foster care) then becomes a step forward to a permanent and lifelong commitment (adoption).

## **Why Do Children Need Foster Care and Adoption Services?**

Most children in foster care come from homes in which they were beaten, degraded, or molested. Many were ignored and starved. There are many reasons:

- ◆ Some birth parents simply aren't able to give appropriate physical and emotional care or appropriate supervision.
- ◆ Some parents and some children can't control their behaviors.
- ◆ Some families have temporary crises, like health problems or loss of income and housing, when their children need foster care.
- ◆ Some parents have serious parenting problems because of drug abuse, mental illness, or other conditions.
- ◆ Some birth parents voluntarily place their children for adoption.

## **How Many Kentucky Kids Need Services?**

According to the numbers, more than 6,000 children are in CFC foster care now. Last year, more than 500 children in CFC foster care were adopted -- and more than 75 percent were adopted by their foster families.

But those are just numbers. In terms of broken spirits and countless tears, the need is immense.

We need your help.